

Discussing and planning medicines support

A quick guide for home care managers providing medicines support



Medicines help maintain health, treat illness, and manage long-term conditions

Medicines support for adults may be provided by a number of different people, including family, healthcare professionals and homecare staff. It is essential to be clear about what support is needed and who will provide it. As far as possible, the person should manage their medicines themselves. Where it has been agreed that medicines support will be provided as part of a homecare service, it may be helpful to think about the following areas.

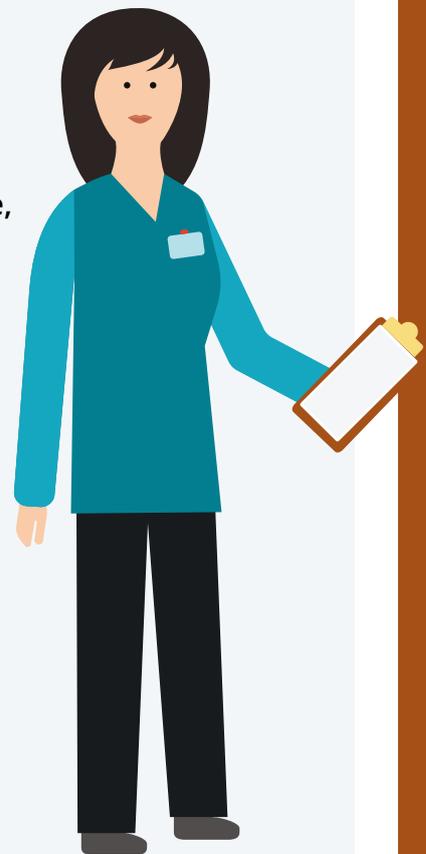
Discussing medicines support

Make sure medicines support is considered when assessing a person's needs, consulting with healthcare colleagues if necessary. Talk to the person and (if they agree) their family or carers about what support they need:

- ✓ What medicines do they use and when?
- ✓ Why do they take these medicines?
- ✓ How do they currently manage and store them?
- ✓ What help do they need?
- ✓ Does their ability to make daily decisions about their medicines change?

Think about the things that might affect the type, amount, or timing of support the person needs. Make sure it is clear who has responsibility for the medicines. Record the discussion and any decisions made.

- ✓ Are the medicines tablets, creams, patches, inhalers, eye drops or liquids?
- ✓ Are there any special instructions to follow, or any devices used to help administer the medicines – e.g. an oral syringe or eye drop dispenser?
- ✓ Are any medicines needed at a particular time?
- ✓ Are any medicines taken 'when required'?
- ✓ Do they take any over-the-counter or herbal medicines, or nutritional supplements?
- ✓ Who will order and collect or deliver the medicines?



The 6 rights (Rs) of medicines administration provide a helpful prompt:

- 1 Right person
- 2 Right medicine
- 3 Right route
- 4 Right dose
- 5 Right time
- 6 Right to decline

Planning and reviewing medicines support

If the person requires help with their medicines and this is being provided as part of a home care service, the care worker should only provide the support agreed in the care plan. The medicines support section of a care plan could cover:

Care plan

Name:

Date of birth:

Needs and wishes

The support the person requires for each medicine, taking their preferences into account

Action

What the care worker needs to do to give that support

Consent

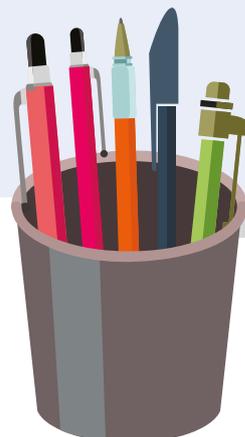
How the care worker will get consent for decisions about medicines



Review

Date on which the support provided will be reviewed. An earlier review will be needed if:

- Changes are made to the person's medicines
- Concerns are raised
- The person goes into hospital
- The person experiences a major change in their life



Medicines administration record (MAR)

Accurate, up-to-date and accessible details of the support given for each medicine on every occasion it is provided.

Who else can help?

To support people to manage their medicines as independently as possible, help may be needed from other professionals – for example, the person who prescribed the medicine, the dispensing pharmacist, or another health professional. They can:

- provide information, advice and support
- check if it is possible to simplify how and when the medicines are taken
- consider if a review might be needed, and if any medicine can be stopped.



Medicines policy

The medicines support provided should be guided by a medicines policy. As well as information about assessing and supporting people to take their medicines, this could include processes for:

- working together with other health and social care providers
- sharing information about a person's medicines
- keeping accurate and up-to-date records
- managing concerns, including medicines-related safeguarding incidents
- when it may be assessed as necessary to give medicines to people without them knowing
- ordering and supplying medicines
- transporting, storing and disposing of medicines
- training and assessing the competence of staff.

Further information

[Managing medicines for adults receiving social care in the community](#)

– NICE guideline

[Fundamental standards](#) – Care Quality Commission

[Community adult social care services: information for providers](#)

– Care Quality Commission

[Home care: delivering personal care and practical support to older people living in their own homes](#) – NICE guideline

[The handling of medicines in social care](#) – Royal Pharmaceutical Society

This content has been co-produced by NICE and SCIE and is based on NICE's guideline on managing medicines for adults receiving social care in the community.

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